REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the thorough examination of the present application. Independent Claims 1, 13, 17, 21, and 25 have been amended to incorporate subject matter similar to that found in their respective dependent Claims 2, 14, 18, 22, and 26, which have been cancelled for consistency therewith, and more clearly define the subject matter thereof over the prior art. Additional support for the amendments to the independent claims may be found in paragraph 0049 of the originally filed specification, for example. No new matter is being added.

In view of the amendments and supporting arguments presented in detail below, it is submitted that all of the claims are patentable.

I. The Claimed Invention

The present invention is directed to a communications system. As recited in amended independent Claim 1, for example, the system includes a plurality of electronic mail (email) data storage devices each using at least one of a plurality of different operating protocols. The system further includes a plurality of mobile wireless communications devices for accessing the email data storage devices and each using at least one of the plurality of different operating protocols, and a protocol interface device. More particularly, the protocol interface device includes a front-end proxy module for communicating with the plurality of mobile wireless communications devices using

respective operating protocols, and a protocol engine module for communicating with the plurality of email data storage devices using respective operating protocols. Moreover, the front-end proxy module and the protocol engine module communicate using a common interface protocol able to represent a desired number of protocol-supported elements for a desired operating protocol, and cooperate to aggregate email messages from the email data storage devices to respective mobile wireless communications devices.

Independent Claims 13 and 17 are directed to related protocol interface devices. Moreover, independent Claim 21 is directed to a related method, and independent Claim 25 is directed to a related computer-readable medium.

II. The Claims Are Patentable

The Examiner rejected independent Claims 1, 13, 17, 21, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2002/0016818 to Kirani et al. in view of U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2002/0160773 to Gresham et al. As noted above, these claims have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of their respective dependent claims 2, 14, 18, and 26, which were similarly rejected. Kirani et al. is directed to an e-mail system that re-packages message attachments optimized for delivery to wireless handheld devices. The system allows for recipients to receive e-mail attachments at a time and in a size/format as desired. The size of attached images is compared to the capabilities of the type of the recipient client device, and

delivery of the original format of those attachments is preempted if they are determined to be burdensome or overwhelming. In cases where these attachments would strain the capabilities of the recipient devices' wireless bandwidth and/or display features, the original attachments are removed from the messages and do not accompany the e-mail delivery. Any detached attachment is saved in a network media-sharing repository, and can be subsequently accessed via a link (e.g., URL) referencing that storage address. Recipients can specify their wireless handheld device types, and opt to receive transformations of this type of attachment as a default substitute in subsequent e-mail deliveries. In cases wherein the recipient has previously used multiple types of client devices when receiving messages from the system, a transformation is applied on the current attachment that corresponds to the least capable in the set of those multiple devices. Recipients may also elect to receive the URL for the network storage address of copies of either the original and/or transformed attachments. See, e.g., paragraph 0037-0040 of Kirani et al.

While the Examiner correctly acknowledges that Kirani et al. fails to teach a front-end proxy module as recited in the independent claims, the Examiner contends that Gresham et al. properly provides this noted deficiency. Gresham et al. is directed to a system for permitting passengers on board an aircraft to send and receive electronic data. The components of the system on board the aircraft include a server having a

plurality of nodes to which computer terminals are attached, as desired. The components of the system on board the aircraft include a wireless access point having a plurality nodes, where the wireless access point is attached to the server and to a plurality of wireless cards inserted into computer terminals, as desired. The computer terminals are laptop or palm-top personal computers belonging to the various passengers on board or fixed terminals within the aircraft. The server communicates with a wide variety of different terminals running different operating systems and with the access point.

Independent Claims 1, 13, 17, 21, and 25 have been amended to recite that the data storage devices are email data storage devices, and that the front-end proxy module and protocol engine module cooperate to aggregate email messages from the email data storage devices to respective mobile wireless communications devices. To the contrary, Kirani et al. is directed to an email system that removes attachments (i.e., image files) from emails addressed to mobile devices and instead provides a link to access the file on a server, or reduces the size/resolution of the attachments before forwarding them to the mobile device. See, e.g., Kirani et al., paragraph 0065-0068. Nowhere does Kirani et al. teach or fairly suggest that the system thereof can be used to aggregate email messages from different email data storage devices and provide them to respective mobile wireless handheld devices.

Moreover, Gresham et al. also fails to provide the noted deficiency. In particular, Gresham et al. is essentially directed to an on-board LAN system for an airplane that includes a proxy server that interfaces with a ground-based electronic messaging system, such that it appears to users that they are communicating directly through the ground-based electronic messaging system. While this system does allow on-board terminals to access message servers **195** to retrieve and delete emails, etc., this reference fails to provide the noted deficiency of aggregating emails from a plurality of different email data storage servers to respective mobile wireless handheld devices. See, e.g., FIG. 1 and paragraph 0140 of Gresham et al.

Accordingly, it is submitted that independent Claims 1, 13, 17, 21, and 25 are patentable over the prior art. Their respective dependent claims, which recite yet further distinguishing features, are also patentable over the prior art and require no further discussion herein.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments to the claims and the arguments provided herein, it is submitted that all the claims are patentable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is requested in due course. Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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